

# INFO WORLD

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NEWS

## Unix servers distribute on-line information

BY CHERYL GERBER

MENLO PARK, Calif. — A start-up company last week debuted a family of Unix servers that gives users on-line access to news wire services, government archives, and university libraries.

WAIS Inc. unveiled Unix-based network publishing servers, source code for customization, and a training package. The company also announced an independent software agreement with Sun Microsystems

Inc., which will market the wide area information servers (WAIS) technology.

"WAIS was designed for wide area networks, not mainframes talking to dumb terminals over packet-switched networks," said John Duhring, WAIS director of business development.

The products, WAIS Server for Unix and WAIS Workstation for Unix, are shipping now for \$10,000 to \$50,000.

Source code, which includes maintenance and support for one year, is priced at \$40,000.

Training costs \$10,000.

The WAIS server runs on Sun Berkeley Software Distribution and Solaris servers, DEC's Alpha, Next Inc.'s workstations and NextStep, Hewlett-Packard Co.'s 9000 series, and IBM RS/6000s.

The software is based on the Z39.50 basic search protocol, which is the standard for information retrieval.

WAIS said Sun is developing desktop products with graphical user interfaces that would augment the WAIS software on

Sun computers.

Trade Inc. of Seattle and Lockheed Missiles & Space Co. Inc. concurrently announced their products' integration with the WAIS servers. Both companies provide access to business or trade statistics from many international databases.

Trade delivers industry-specific data and lets subscribers track shipment activities of companies, products, or countries. Lockheed provides Technology Broker System, a hypermedia search and retrieval system.

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